

## **EcoRA Work Group Conference Call - February 3, 2000, 9 AM - 10:20 AM**

### Participants:

Merrill Coomes, Coomes Assoc.	Steve Hughes, URS
Brad Sample, CH2M Hill	Tom Dahl, Dahl Assoc.
Nick Zilka, IDEQ	Phil Cernera, CDA Tribe
Don Heinle, CH2M Hill	Dick Martindale, EPA
Dan Winstanley, CH2M Hill	Fred Kirschner, Spokane Tribe
Anne Dailey, EPA	John Roland, Ecology
Matt Kadlec, Ecology	Dana Houkal, URS
Geoff Fromm, IDEQ	Harry Ohlendorf, CH2M Hill

### Update on CSM5 - Spokane River

- Don Heinle has gone through the Spokane River material provide by Ecology - fish population data, chemistry data, etc.
- Don concurs with Ecology's suggestion that we substitute large scale sucker for small mouth bass as a receptor because in reviewing available data there was no indication that small mouth bass is abundant in the Spokane R. (except in the Spokane Arm of Lake Roosevelt) while the sucker is very abundant; this change will be reflected in the receptor table
- At the Nov. workshop and subsequent workgroup conversations, there was discussion about revising the segmentation of CSM 5 and potentially moving the area upstream of Post Falls Dam to CSM 4 (CSM 4, segment 4)
- After substantial discussion during this call, it was decided to maintain the CSM 4 & 5 boundaries and segment boundaries with no changes. The general sense was that the differences within the segments of CSM 4/5 could be addressed within the EcoRA text/tables/figures and by the potential inclusion of additional habitat-types (e.g., lacustrine). There did not seem to be substantial value added to the analysis by revising the boundaries given the map rework and other revisions that would be necessary to reflect the changes in boundaries.

### EcoRA Report Annotated Outline/Table of Contents

- an annotated outline for the EcoRA report was distributed electronically to the EcoRA workgroup (and faxed/mailed to several individuals per their requests) prior to the phone call
- the outline is the structure that will be used to build the EcoRA report
- it was noted that some clarification of the uncertainty analysis was included in the EcoRA annotated outline in response to the conversation during the EcoRA call on 1/20/00
- Frank Frutchey raised again the issue of data from non-native species versus native

species and recommended that we emphasize data from native species in the EcoRA analysis

- we discussed the information provided by Kate LeJeune, Stratus Consultants, (and transmitted to the EcoRA group electronically by Dailey) in response to the notes from the 1/20 EcoRA call which indicated that native or horticultural species have not been demonstrated to be more or less sensitive in testing
- it was also noted that a weight of evidence approach will be used - not just a single toxicity value - and that all available site-specific data is indeed being incorporated into the risk analysis
- Frank Frutchey noted that about 7% of submerged lands in Lower CDA valley have been treated by individuals using various methods over last 30 years, is there any way to evaluate these lands? Most of the activity has happened on agricultural land. After some discussion it was concluded that since this is largely a treatability issue it will be primarily evaluated in the FS but from bioavailability and effectiveness evaluation perspective it should be addressed in the EcoRA.
- Phil Cernera indicated that Barbara Williams would be at the next CBIG meeting on March 8<sup>th</sup> and perhaps this could be discussed at that time. Given the timing for the project, it was decided that a conversation ASAP would be necessary in order for any relevant outcomes to be included in the EcoRA. Mary Jane Nearman was on the phone with Phil for a few minutes and indicated that she would try and set something up with Frank Frutchey, Barbara Williams, and key FS team personnel - perhaps the week of 2/14. Stay tuned....
- Merrill Coomes asked about the CSM versus ecological conceptual model referenced in the outline and links with the food web
- in the CSM models we have referred to the receptor tables for the food web which will be included in the risk analysis but may be able to have a link from CSM table to receptor tables and food web - URS/CH will discuss this internally and see if the CSMs can be revised to make the clear link to the food webs; might be most effective to present this information in separate tables
- Merrill also had a question about the basic ecological condition or "value" - it was noted that Appendix E brings in much of what Merrill is raising as an issue
- in current jargon "value" is typically used to mean ecological service but we are not really getting into this except for the ability of land to provide "service to wildlife"
- EcoRA is primarily comparing assessment sites to reference area sites but not making an conclusion of whether there is still "value" to ecologically degraded areas
- Merrill noted that many times soil can have high metals concentrations but still have a thriving habitat
- Dana Houkal noted that via categories of habitat - physical, chemical, & biological we will be able to recognize and evaluate these situations where plants may thrive in an area of high metals (details of this analysis will be in Appendix E to the EcoRA)

Schedule - REVISED

- Revised draft EcoRA schedule due to the need to include additional available information in the database to be used for the risk calculations
  - >> EcoRA report now due 3/28
  - >> EcoRA Appendix E (Ecological Status Ranking and Ecological Objectives) will be incorporating results from the EcoRA and so will not be available until April 11 at the latest
  - >> EcoRA workgroup workshop 4/25 (all day) and 4/26 (morning only) in CDA
  - >> Comment on the draft EcoRA report will be due 4/26
- while the dates have shifted, the same amount of time as initially proposed is provided for parties to review the draft EcoRA report
- we anticipate mailing the draft EcoRA report in hardcopy to the EcoRA work group and not relying on electronic transmission of this large document
- in order to meet the schedule for completion of the EcoRA (so that the result can be integrated into the RI report and Feasibility Study), we will need comments on the draft EcoRA by 4/26 COB

#### Next Teleconference

- Next EcoRA call will be on February 17, 2000 at 9 AM PST (call-in number is 206-553-4602)
- topics of discussion will include:
  - additional follow-up on the EcoRA annotated outline
  - update on CSM 5
  - follow-up on discussion with Frank Frutche and others regarding Lower CDA treatability
  - update on the receptor table for EcoRA